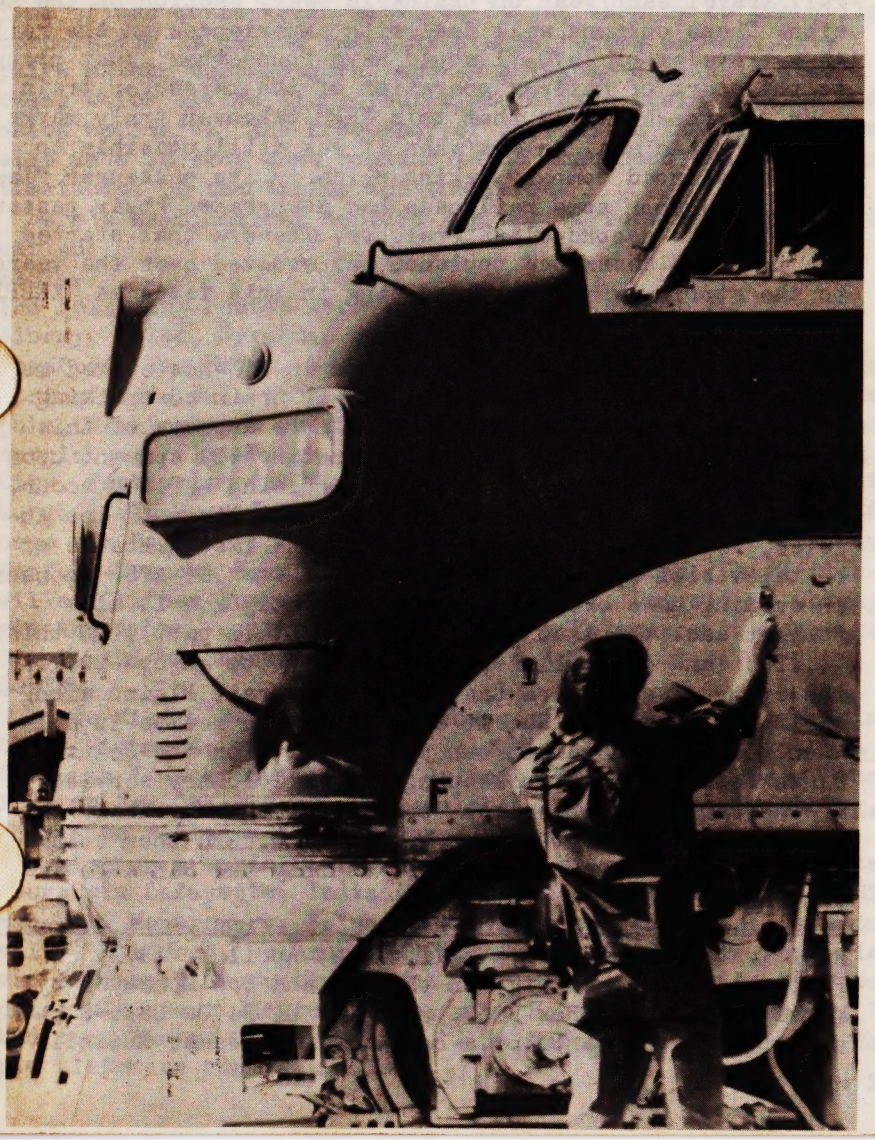
RAIL TRAVEL newsletter

Volume 1 April 5, 1971 Number 9



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In order to serve as many Americans as possible, consistent with profitability, Volpony has devised a set of 16 city pairs, between which mail service must be provided by the corporation. These routes would serve 85% of the population presently served by the mails. The plan, according to Volpony, would "establish a viable mail passage system which can be modernized and expanded in accordance with the need."

Mail officials argue that with the advent of other modes of communication such as telephone and television the need for mail service is steadily decreasing, and the public clearly prefers the other modes. They point to the increased costs of mail service and the large losses incurred in operating it.

The ICC (Interstate Concrete Constructors), NARP (National Amateur Rail Pushers), and other interested groups have 30 days to comment upon the proposed system before Volpony decides upon the final network. Already some observers in Denver, Minneapolis, Atlanta and Phoenix are expressing concern that their areas will be without mail service under the proposed network.

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Message Media,
Post Office Box 9007,
Berkeley, CA 94709 U.S.A.

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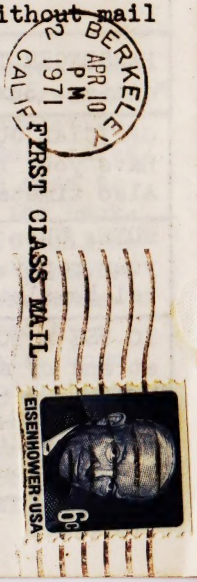

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BERKELEY APR 10 PM 2 1971 CALIF

FIRST CLASS MAIL

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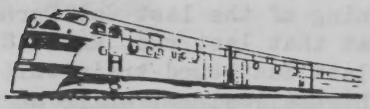

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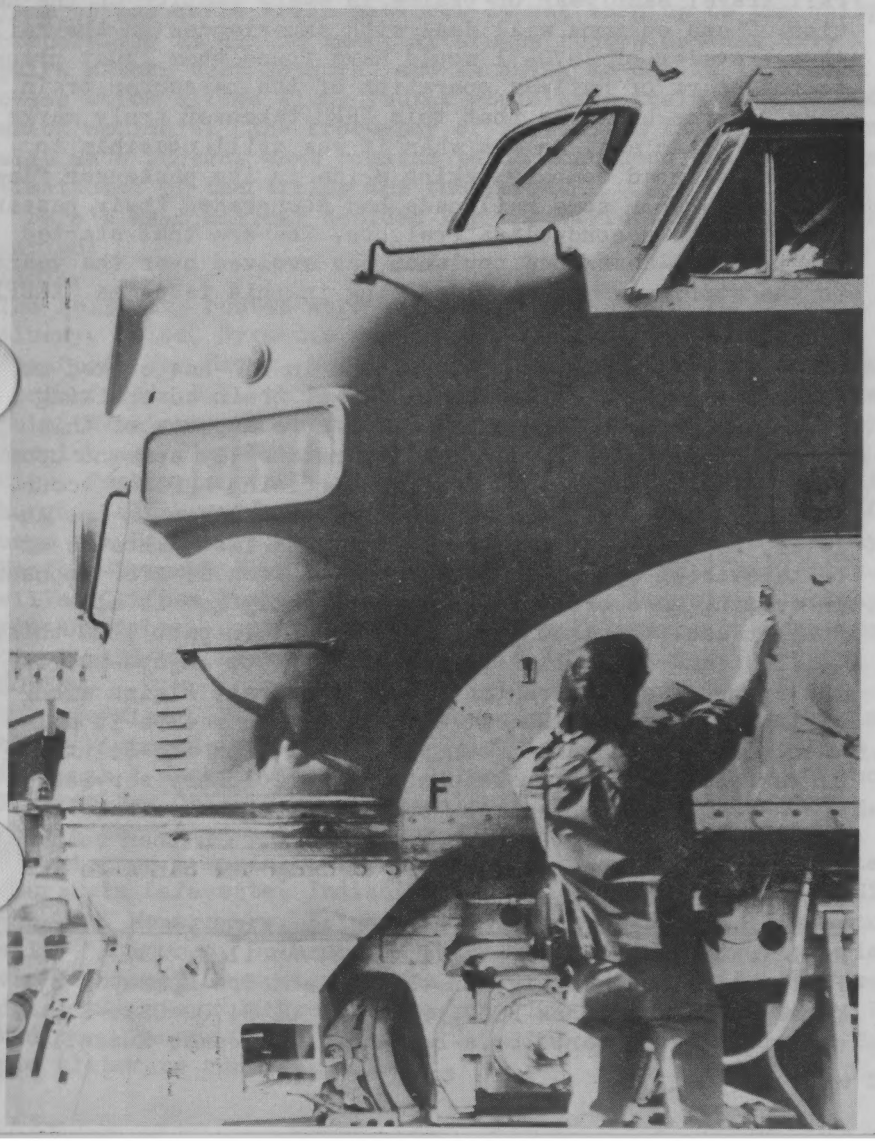

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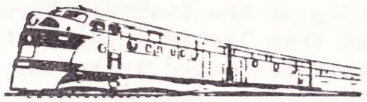

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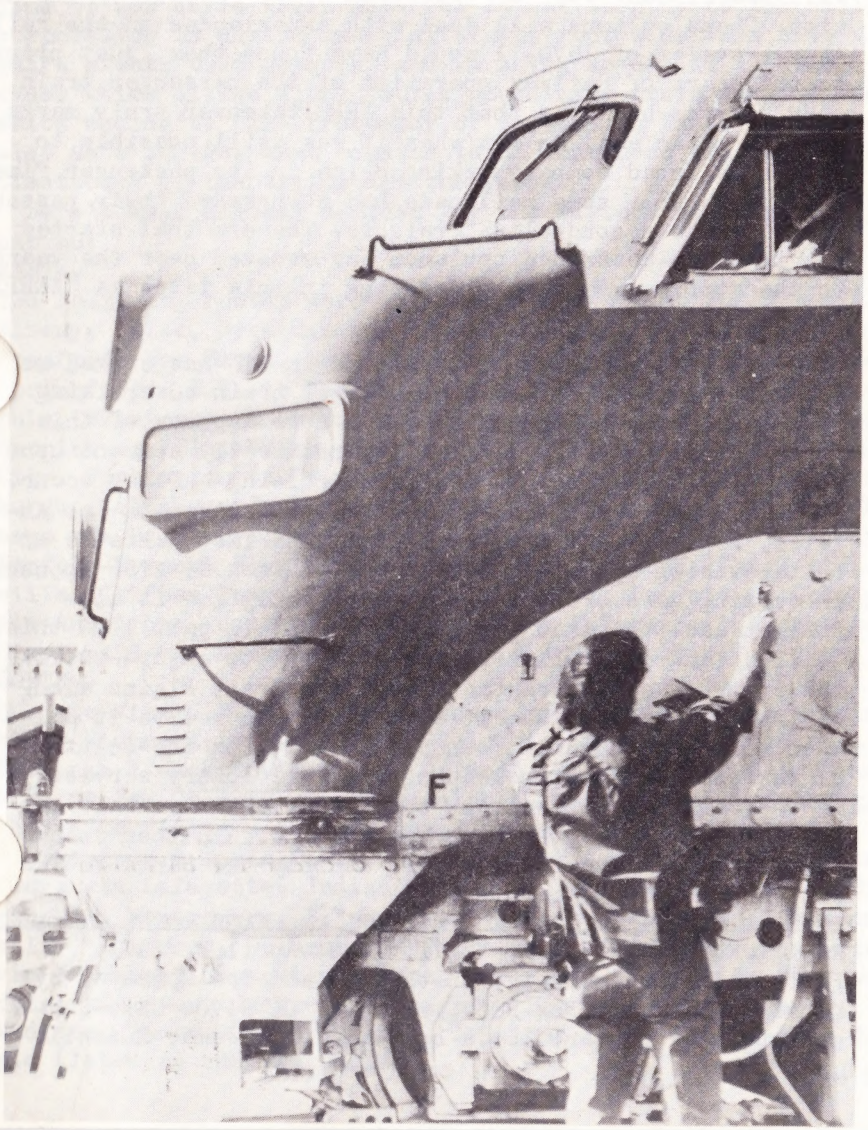


ON THE COVER: In honor of the first anniversary of the running of the last California Zephyr we present a photo made at that last run, March 21, 1970. The lead F unit of the last Eastbound train waits at the Oakland station for the highball signal while an unidentified railfan holds aloft a microphone to capture for posterity that last horn blast. The photo was made on Panatomic-X film with a 2¼ x 2¼ single lens reflex Soligor 66 camera. Photo by Message Media.

WITH THIS ISSUE, RTN begins serializing chapters from an upcoming book by Paul Rayton. Mr. Rayton is a rail traveler (he disavows the term "fan") who averages 25,000 miles of rail travel each year on trains in every section of the nation. These columns will deal with experiences on the rails as a traveler of 1970-71 would have found them, just prior to the start of Railpax operation of the passenger train.

Mr. Rayton believes that this NRPC takeover truly marks the end of an era, an era when it was still possible to find a railroad company taking pride in its passenger fleet, and a time when some railroads had downgraded their passenger fleet to second-class freights. The era that started out in Beebe-described opulence has evolved over the years to the stories we begin presenting in this issue as "KEEPING TRACK."

NO SINGLE ARTICLE we've presented in RTN has evoked more comment than the article on passenger train advertising in issue number 4. We intend to cover more aspects of this topic as time goes by, and will periodically comment upon newsworthy happenings in train advertising as they occur.

Paul Rayton (see paragraph above), who lives in Los Angeles, reports that what was likely the last Santa Fe ad on television appeared there on KTTV March 9. ATSF sponsors an evening news broadcast that apparently now is all-freight ads. The last passenger ad went in part like this: "...The land is still here for everyone to enjoy--telling the story of adventure that swept the Great Plains along the Santa Fe Trail. See it come alive and relive it all--when you ride where you can see it best: on the deluxe Santa Fe Super Chief--sleeping car, all luxury service. Or the Santa Fe El Capitan--penthouse, economy chair car service. ... Make your reservations now. And then relax. And watch the story of the West as only the Santa Fe Trail can show it..."

Rail Travel Newsletter, Vol 1, No 9, April 5, 1971. Published twice monthly, on the 1st and 3rd Mondays, by Message Media, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709 USA. Subscription $4 a year; 25¢ a copy. Editor: James Russell.

RAILPAX ANNOUNCES FINAL ROUTES AND STATIONS

A FLURRY OF CRITICISM IS EVOKED

The National Rail Passenger Corporation announced March 22 --at least a week ahead of schedule--its final route selection and the stations that will be served in the nationwide network of passenger trains. The result of that announcement was the biggest outpouring of criticism since NRPC was formed, and the largest quantity of passenger train news to appear in the media in memory.

The Dept. of Transportation last Jan. 28 announced the outline of the basic train network. It was then up to the Railpax corporation to choose among alternate routes between city pairs within that network, and in doing so decide in some cases which cities along routes would have train service and which wouldn't. The frequency of service on these routes was also made public. What remains to be announced are the actual timetables of the trains and the fares.

Here's what Railpax decided for the various sections of the nation:

EAST--

The following routes were selected: New York to Buffalo via Albany, Utica, Syracuse and Rochester. N.Y. to Boston via Stamford, New Haven, New London & Providence, with a spur to Springfield. N.Y. to Washington via Newark, Trenton, Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore. N.Y. to Chicago via Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, Indianapolis, St. Louis & Jefferson City. Washington to St. Louis via Baltimore, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, Columbus, Indianapolis & Terre Haute. Washington to Chicago via Baltimore, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, Canton & Ft. Wayne. Norfolk-Newport News to Cincinnati via Richmond, Charlottesville, Clifton Forge, Charleston & Kenova. Detroit to Chicago via Ann Arbor, Jackson, Battle Creek & Kalamazoo. Chicago to Cincinnati via Kankakee, Lafayette & Indianapolis.

SOUTH--

N.Y. to Miami, Tampa-St. Petersburg via Philadelphia, Washington & Richmond; via Raleigh & Columbia; via Charleston; via Savannah & Jacksonville; via Orlando, Wildwood & W.Palm Beach. N.Y. to New Orleans via Philadelphia, Washington, Lynchburg, Charlotte, Atlanta & Birmingham. Chicago to St. Louis via Bloomington & Springfield. Chicago to Miama & Tampa-St. Petersburg via Lafayette, Indianapolis, Louisville, Nashville, Birmingham, Montgomery, Bainbridge, Valdosta, Waycross, Jacksonville, Wildwood, Orlando & W.Palm Beach. Chicago to New Orleans via Kankakee, Champaign-Urbana, Effingham, Centralia, Carbondale, Memphis & Jackson. Chicago to Houston via Galesburg, Ft. Madison, Kansas City, Wichita, Oklahoma City, Ft. Worth & Temple (later to run via Dallas).

WEST--
Kansas City to N.Y. via Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, Indianapolis, St. Louis & Jefferson City. Seattle to Chicago via Yakima, Pasco, Spokane, Sand Point, Glacier Park, Williston, Minot, Grand Forks, Fargo, Willmar, Minneapolis-St.Paul & Milwaukee. San Francisco to Chicago via Sacramento, Reno, Winnemucca, Wells, Salt Lake City, Grand Junction, Denver, Lincoln, Omaha & Ottumwa. Los Angeles to Chicago via Flagstaff, Gallup, Albuquerque, La Junta, Hutchinson, Newton, Ottawa, Kansas City, Ft. Madison & Galesburg. Los Angeles to New Orleans via Phoenix, Tucson, El Paso, San Antonio, Houston & Beaumont. Seattle to San Diego via Portland, Klamath Falls, San Francisco-Oakland, Santa Barbara, Los Angeles & Fullerton.

There will be 184 trains connecting 114 cities of 100,000 or more population. About 115 present trains will be dropped. The following states will have no trains at all: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Arkansas, South Dakota and Wyoming. Idaho will be traversed by rail only at one short northerly point.

It came as a shock to many that Cleveland will have no trains, likewise Toledo. Presently 9 trains plus one commuter enter Cleveland. Mayor Stokes and Ohio's Senators and Representatives all protested to no avail. The Cleveland Plain Dealer, however, editorialized against public support of trains. Service and ridership in the Cleveland area are now poor. The N.Y. Times quoted a Cleveland conductor: "The cars aren't clean. You can't get connections. They didn't want the passengers and drove them away."

One of the loudest protests in Congress came from Senator Mike Mansfield of Montana, who together with his fellow Senator Lee Metcalf discovered that the one route crossing Montana between Seattle and Chicago will follow the northerly Great Northern route which bypasses 6 of the state's largest cities. Said Mansfield: "I don't intend to vote for any funds for this railroad corporation. I think we've been had...We can spend money for an SST and finance round trips to the moon, but we can't take care of the surface needs of the people of this planet...This is an outrage, an outrage." The two Montana Senators introduced a bill to return federal land grants to the U.S. in places where passenger service is eliminated.

Matthew Guinan, head of the 135,000-member Transport Workers Union said "The proposed network is a cynical betrayal of pledges of improving rail service for the riding public and represents a serious curtailment of railroad jobs." Up to 15,000 workers could lose their jobs when Railpax begins operation. Delicate negotiations are now proceeding among the railroads, the unions, and Railpax.

Rep. Harvey Staggers of West Virginia, chairman of the House Commerce Committee felt the railroads had too much say in the final route selection. But David Bradshaw, one of the Railpax

directors, said "Some of the most amazed people in the world were railroad executives. I sat in on every session. At no time did a railroad executive influence any decision. The incorporators made all the choices." A Senate Appropriations subcommittee met April 6 and several angry Senators confronted Railpax Chairman David Kendall. Senators McClellan and Fulbright of Arkansas claimed that the citizens of their state are being discriminated against, since they are taxed for the system which bypasses Arkansas. Likewise Senators McGee and Hansen of Wyoming made a similar claim for their state. McGee asked for withdrawal of the government's $40 million unless Wyoming gets passenger service.

There has been talk in Congress and elsewhere of attempting to delay the start of Railpax operations until September to allow sufficient time to construct a meaningful system. There is as yet no evidence that moves to delay Railpax's beginning will get off the ground.

In California, the San Joaquin Valley is losing its two present trains. The San Francisco-Los Angeles route was selected to run via the present SP Coast Route, except that trains will originate in Oakland instead of San Francisco. They will then travel southward via San Jose over a portion of track that has been freight-only for several years. The through train from Seattle-San Diego will also go this way; that service will be tri-weekly. Thus there will be ten trains per week in each direction between S.F. and L.A.

Senator John Tunney criticized the loss of San Joaquin Valley service, saying it was "dictated by an ill-advised penny-pinching Congress." He and Senator Alan Cranston both called for retention of both the Coast and Valley routes. Cranston and Rep. B. Sisk of Fresno agreed that cities in the Valley should attempt to contract with Railpax for service.

Elsewhere on the West Coast the frequency of trains has been changed. Seattle-Portland will be cut from 3 to 2 per day, and similarly Los Angeles-San Diego. The only less-than-daily portion of the West Coast run is Portland-Oakland, over which the tri-weekly Seattle-San Diego train will operate. Seattle to Vancouver service will be dropped. The Oakland-Chicago train will run tri-weekly over the SP route to Salt Lake City, bypassing Ogden, and then over the Zephyr route via Denver.

California's three main railroads, SP, UP, and Santa Fe, are apparently all joining Railpax, though only UP has formally announced its move. The railroads have all posted notices of train discontinuances effective April 30.

The one area of the nation the least affected by changes in service is the Northeast Corridor--Boston-New York-Washington.

That region will have only minor changes in schedules when May 1 rolls around. But there is talk of train schedules being doubled by next Fall and running times doubled in the near future. Over half of the trains Railpax will operate will run in that corridor.

RAILPAX WORKS IN SECRECY

One railroad man called Railpax the "best-kept secret since the Manhattan Project." He was understandably concerned whether he would have a job come May 1. But some hush-hush was necessary while Railpax worked out intricate negotiations with railroads and unions.

The corporation has reportedly now chosen its official colors and official nickname to replace "railpax", but is not yet revealing them. It has also chosen an advertising symbol. Presumably these will all burst on the scene in a matter of days or weeks, dramatically heralding a new era in passenger train service. One thing it has not yet chosen is a president. Three airline executives have reportedly been considered but have either turned down the job or been dropped for other reasons. The annual salary for the job is $150,000.

ROCK ISLAND LINE WON'T JOIN RAILPAX

Rock Island became the first railroad to announce officially that it will stay out of NRPC, at least until 1973, when it will have another chance to join. It thus must continue running its two remaining trains, Chicago-Rock Island, and the Chicago-Peoria "Peorian" until March 1, 1973. It hopes to obtain some state help on promotion & financing to cut losses. The railroad originally estimated it would cost $1 million to join, but that estimate rose to as much as $4.7 million.

MORE ABOUT RAIL STRIKES

A U.S. court of appeals March 31 ruled that the United Transportation Union could carry out selective strikes against some railroads after May 6, but must give two weeks' notice. SCL and BN are the two roads the union has planned to strike. The railroads can still carry the decision to the Supreme Court

In Canada, a nationwide rail strike involving both CN and CP has apparently been averted.

RAIL CHANGES IN BERKELEY

RTN's home town will apparently be losing its passenger stop. The city is not listed in Railpax's schedules. The nearest stop will be Oakland. In the municipal election of April 6 Berkeley voters agreed to buy the Santa Fe tracks that cross the city. Only freights now run on them, and they seemed to be strongly in evidence the evening before the election, with much horn-blowing--to scare out votes?

QUOTES OF THE WEEK ***

"Uncle Sam, in the person of a quasi-government corporation called Railpax, is going into the passenger train business in a few weeks. The experiment is a hopeful one, sort of a shotgun marriage between nostalgia and hard-headed business, between those who like trains and those who like money. Its offspring, revealed Monday, pleased no one in particular."

--San Francisco Chronicle editorial, March 28

"...Railpax officials are hardly in a position to give much weight to the wishes of rail buffs or to the nation's long-run transportation problems. The quasi-public corporation created by Congress is at the very best a holding operation that will keep skeletal passenger service until more durable programs can be formulated--and financed."

--Wall Street Journal editorial, March 31

"For the price of just one new jetport, or $600 million, rail service between New York and Boston could be turned into something as good as Japan's spectacularly successful New Tokaido Line. ... Unlike a transatlantic SST service, moreover, the new rail line would not cater to a small elite; an estimated 5 million people would use it in its first year."

--Life Magazine editorial, March 19

"It's the universal assumption of the railroads that Railpax won't make money, but it's absurd to judge its success or failure on profits."

--Anthony Haswell quoted in Chicago Daily News

"Railpax will be a loser throughout its life."

--SP President Benjamin Biaggini, quoted in S.F. Chronicle March 23

"Hanging over the enterprise like a gigantic sword is the assumption that at some fairly early data--2 or 3 or 5 years--Railpax will have to become self-supporting or even profitable, or die. This passes understanding. Nobody requires the post office to make a profit; highways and everything that moves on them get enormous federal support; all sorts of other public facilities (national parks and airports, for example) are subsidized. Why rail passenger service should necessarily have to be a profit-making operation, once taken out of the railroads' hands, has never been explained."

--Tom Wicker, N.Y. Times, March 25

Keeping Track with PAUL RAYTON

Aboard the POCAHONTAS—August 1970

A remarkable treat for travelers between Cincinnati and Virginia points (Richmond, Norfolk, Virginia Beach, etc.) is the Norfolk and Western train THE POCAHONTAS, named after the American Indian princess. This train provides fine service with a host of attractive amenities: a dome car that runs the entire route; pleasant, clean sleeping cars in service; complimentary meals for sleeping car passengers; and best of all, no first class fare charged for passengers using the sleeper. You pay only for your room. A fully-equipped dining car is included, complete with extraordinary serving china and the de rigueur linen napkins and tablecloths. And the prices in the diner, like the fares, are very reasonable.

This train leaves Cincinnati at 11:25 PM daily. The sleeping cars are open and available from 9:30 on, so when we pulled out of the station we were already comfortably settled in. I noted that the 10-roomette/6-bedroom sleeper was about two-thirds occupied. At least some people were taking advantage of this deal. But I would have expected (and hoped for) more, this being the Summer travel season.

We headed directly for the dome when we left the station. Unfortunately, the crew did not want the lights in the dome turned off until they had collected all the coach tickets, so we did not see the city by night as clearly as we had hoped. Eventually the lights went off, and we rolled on through the night. Small houses, nestled against hills, winked their lights at us.

It started to look like a bad trip when about 35 minutes after departure we came to a non-station stop at some red signal. I suspected that this might be the prelude to a series of interminable delays and late arrivals, the sort of events that give train riding a black eye. It wasn't too long, however, before we started again, and then we continued without further interruptions.

Retiring soon, I found the condition of the roadbed to be worth a grade of B-, quite acceptable for getting some sleep.

Came the dawn, and the customary Appalachian mists hung over the hills. We didn't have much time to dawdle before breakfast, because the sleeper and diner come off the train at Roanoke (10:35 AM). The coaches and dome and a different diner continue on to Norfolk. We ate our complimentary breakfast alongside the New River. It was a rather pretty river, long transverse rapids giving the impression of a natural salmon run or even a river on a ladder.

Feeling adventurous for breakfast, I decided to try the "Virginia Smithfield Ham, with egg and fried apples." If you have never been through Virginia, the chances are that you have not yet tried this type of ham. It is not a usual sold-in-the-markets type of product. It is both smoke cured as well as salt preserved, and the result is a ham that is like no other! There is more flavor in a single forkful of Smithfield ham than in probably a whole hamhock of a less powerful brand. When you bite this ham, it creates a veritable explosion of fine ham and salt taste in your mouth. Good advice is to be sure you have plenty of water in your glass! The egg was prepared as requested, and the tangy fried apples, served in a separate dish, were a delightful counterpoint to the ham.

The list price for the above is $2.10, and that includes appetizers (juices, fruits or cereals) as well as rolls or toast, and beverage. For those not desiring the Smithfield ham, there is also regular ("Sugar Cured") ham, bacon, sausage, or pancake entrees. These other breakfasts run $1.35 to $1.95 for the complete meal. With prices like these, I don't know why the diner was not crowded to capacity. As it was, it seemed that maybe a quarter of the people on board were eating breakfast; the rest just waited. They obviously did not know what they were missing. Yet how were they going to find out about Pocahontas-style breakfasts if nobody made them aware of the service and pointed out its specialities and advantages? They weren't, and they didn't.

The entire meal is served on harmonious, specially made pottery. All the plates have a fret motif design around the edge, and on one side there is an elegantly scribed "N & W Ry" in colors matching the rim design. I was also struck by the fact that the pats of butter were 1) not wrapped between lids of paper, and 2) marked with the "N & W Ry" impression. Specially marked butter, even! I was singularly impressed by the gargantuan silver pots in which coffee was served. They could easily be described as ostentatious--if coffee pots qualify for labels like that.

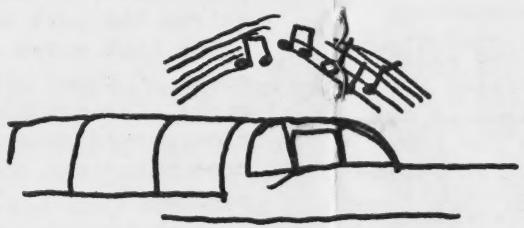
Since the sleeper did not run the full route, we had to collect our belongings and move up into the coach for the balance of the run to Norfolk. Having accomplished this, we proceeded to the dome for more sightseeing.

After the stop in Roanoke, we continued eastward, completing our traversal of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Our route then continued on through mid-Virginia and historical country of the War Between the States. Lynchburg and Appomattox evoked visions of soldiers, dressed in blue or gray, running across these selfsame fields, bent on killing each other. And today it all looks so green and peaceful.

But for the typical, muggy haze, we could have seen much more of the geography. People familiar with the area and the train were riding in the dome, pointing out to us where we would have seen things if it had only been a little clearer. I resolved to take the ride again in Winter, when the humidity would be lower and the view clearer.

Cleaner dome windows would have helped too. We had first noticed that they were not exactly crystal clear leaving Cincinnati the night before. Today they are no better. I overheard some people discussing the dome car (incidentally, one of the third domes, with curved glass windows and two-abreast seating) and remarking how nice and cool it was in the dome today. This particular car is notorious among "them as knows" for its inability to maintain proper temperature. Today it is pleasant and cool, but usually, we hear, it is a miniature steam bath. I am thankful for what I can get.

Poking around, I looked into a little cubbyhole and saw posted on the door the instructions for operation of the radio and music equipment which at one time had been installed in the car. This car, I discovered, had originally run on the Wabash between St. Louis and Chicago. Of course the equipment is now long gone, but the instructions remain, mementos of an age, not so long ago really, when the railroads were actually trying to please the traveling public.



I sat and ruminated on that for awhile, and soon found that I was getting hungry again. What better motivation than that for lunch? We went down to the now-different dining car. It turned out to be an exact copy of the dining car we had eaten in at breakfasttime. Why did they change them at Roanoke? It seemed a little silly. But the car was truly delightful. The sunlight now brought out many details we had missed during the fog in the morning. There are mirrors complete with inlaid gold leaf lining the walls between the windows. The overall decor is warm-colored and very pleasant. This train is one of those that still utilize those magnificent glass water pitchers on each table. It is very fresh and pleasant to watch the water being moved around in small waves by the motion of the train. Sunlight streams in and makes it glisten and sparkle like liquid diamond.

I decide to try the Pot Roast of Beef with gravy ($2.95). My wife wants to try the Fluffy Cheese Omelet ($2.40). Both of these prices include the entire meal. (With sleeper gone, lunch is not complimentary.)

This train carries one of the largest selections of vegetables I have ever seen a dining service provide. On this noon-time menu (the same menu is used for the evening dinner, incidentally) the list includes whipped potatoes, string beans, whole kernel corn, buttered squash, and sliced beets. While these are more or less straightforward preparations, at least they are not all heavy in starch--a true blessing. An even greater treat is the preparation and serving of these dishes. I found the string beans to have been prepared in ham juice. This little bit of customizing transforms a potentially average serving to a real pleasure. It adds a whole new dimension to beans. The squash was not overspiced, as is often the case, thus retaining some real natural flavor. The Harvard beets were hot, with a smooth sweet 'n sour sauce over them.

The Pot Roast was soft, succulent, and juicy. The gravy reflected care taken in preparing it: hand-crafted. The omelet was assembled well and the cheese did not ooze all over the plate.

These dinner prices did not include the appetizer, unfortunately. Soup or juice (30¢) or shrimp cocktail ($1.50) are available. All other items are included: two vegetables, rolls or bread, dessert and beverage. There is also an "economy" meal listed for $1.50 with filet of flounder or spaghetti with meatballs--again including vegetables, bread, dessert and beverage. And for $4.00 there is a full T-bone steak dinner, all-inclusive. Salads, except with the steak dinner, must be ordered a la carte.

There is a "wine list" in use aboard THE POCAHONTAS. While by no means an exhaustive listing, at least some domestic wines are carried: Sauterne, Burgundy, and Claret. Ninety cents for a "split" bottle. Of course various other drinks are listed, running about $1.10 per drink.

During lunch we progressed along through Virginia. At one point we found ourselves high on a trestle bridge with a commanding overview of all the nearby trees.

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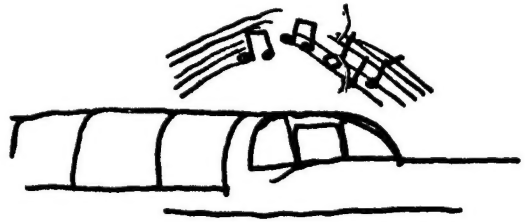

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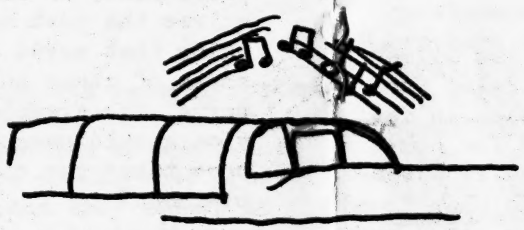

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ON THE COVER: In honor of the first anniversary of the running of the last California Zephyr we present a photo made at that last run, March 21, 1970. The lead F unit of the last Eastbound train waits at the Oakland station for the highball signal while an unidentified railfan holds aloft a microphone to capture for posterity that last horn blast. The photo was made on Panatomic-X film with a 2¼ x 2¼ single lens reflex Soligor 66 camera. Photo by Message Media.

WITH THIS ISSUE, RTN begins serializing chapters from an upcoming book by Paul Rayton. Mr. Rayton is a rail traveler (he disavows the term "fan") who averages 25,000 miles of rail travel each year on trains in every section of the nation. These columns will deal with experiences on the rails as a traveler of 1970-71 would have found them, just prior to the start of Railpax operation of the passenger train.

Mr. Rayton believes that this NRPC takeover truly marks the end of an era, an era when it was still possible to find a railroad company taking pride in its passenger fleet, and a time when some railroads had downgraded their passenger fleet to second-class freights. The era that started out in Beebe-described opulence has evolved over the years to the stories we begin presenting in this issue as "KEEPING TRACK."

NO SINGLE ARTICLE we've presented in RTN has evoked more comment than the article on passenger train advertising in issue number 4. We intend to cover more aspects of this topic as time goes by, and will periodically comment upon newsworthy happenings in train advertising as they occur.

Paul Rayton (see paragraph above), who lives in Los Angeles, reports that what was likely the last Santa Fe ad on television appeared there on KTTV March 9. ATSF sponsors an evening news broadcast that apparently now is all-freight ads. The last passenger ad went in part like this: "...The land is still here for everyone to enjoy--telling the story of adventure that swept the Great Plains along the Santa Fe Trail. See it come alive and relive it all--when you ride where you can see it best: on the deluxe Santa Fe Super Chief--sleeping car, all luxury service. Or the Santa Fe El Capitan--penthouse, economy chair car service. ... Make your reservations now. And then relax. And watch the story of the West as only the Santa Fe Trail can show it..."

Rail Travel Newsletter, Vol 1, No 9, April 5, 1971. Published twice monthly, on the 1st and 3rd Mondays, by Message Media, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709 USA. Subscription $4 a year; 25¢ a copy. Editor: James Russell.

RAILPAX ANNOUNCES FINAL ROUTES AND STATIONS

A FLURRY OF CRITICISM IS EVOKED

The National Rail Passenger Corporation announced March 22 --at least a week ahead of schedule--its final route selection and the stations that will be served in the nationwide network of passenger trains. The result of that announcement was the biggest outpouring of criticism since NRPC was formed, and the largest quantity of passenger train news to appear in the media in memory.

The Dept. of Transportation last Jan. 28 announced the outline of the basic train network. It was then up to the Railpax corporation to choose among alternate routes between city pairs within that network, and in doing so decide in some cases which cities along routes would have train service and which wouldn't. The frequency of service on these routes was also made public. What remains to be announced are the actual timetables of the trains and the fares.

Here's what Railpax decided for the various sections of the nation:

EAST--

The following routes were selected: New York to Buffalo via Albany, Utica, Syracuse and Rochester. N.Y. to Boston via Stamford, New Haven, New London & Providence, with a spur to Springfield. N.Y. to Washington via Newark, Trenton, Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore. N.Y. to Chicago via Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, Indianapolis, St. Louis & Jefferson City. Washington to St. Louis via Baltimore, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, Columbus, Indianapolis & Terre Haute. Washington to Chicago via Baltimore, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, Canton & Ft. Wayne. Norfolk-Newport News to Cincinnati via Richmond, Charlottesville, Clifton Forge, Charleston & Kenova. Detroit to Chicago via Ann Arbor, Jackson, Battle Creek & Kalamazoo. Chicago to Cincinnati via Kankakee, Lafayette & Indianapolis.

SOUTH--

N.Y. to Miami, Tampa-St. Petersburg via Philadelphia, Washington & Richmond; via Raleigh & Columbia; via Charleston; via Savannah & Jacksonville; via Orlando, Wildwood & W.Palm Beach. N.Y. to New Orleans via Philadelphia, Washington, Lynchburg, Charlotte, Atlanta & Birmingham. Chicago to St. Louis via Bloomington & Springfield. Chicago to Miama & Tampa-St. Petersburg via Lafayette, Indianapolis, Louisville, Nashville, Birmingham, Montgomery, Bainbridge, Valdosta, Waycross, Jacksonville, Wildwood, Orlando & W.Palm Beach. Chicago to New Orleans via Kankakee, Champaign-Urbana, Effingham, Centralia, Carbondale, Memphis & Jackson. Chicago to Houston via Galesburg, Ft. Madison, Kansas City, Wichita, Oklahoma City, Ft. Worth & Temple (later to run via Dallas).

COMMUTING AND RAPID TRANSIT

Ronan: Witchcraft and Magic Won't Work

The head of New York's Metropolitan Transportation Authority, William J. Ronan, writing in the N.Y. Times March 24, had this to say about financing public transit: "We cannot burden the straphanger with the full cost of operating our subways and commuter lines. The time has come to make the same major commitment of public funds to maintain and operate urban rights-of-way on rail as we have long ago done on highways, airways and waterways.

"Witchcraft and magic can't make our railways run. What we need now is the public commitment and the fiscal priorities to see this commitment through. We have no choice."

"Frenetic Movement Through a Concrete Wasteland"

That's how the N.Y. Times described auto travel on freeways (expressways, throughways to you Easterners) in an editorial March 25 while reporting a victory won by the city of Memphis in the Supreme Court. Overton Park in Memphis was threatened by 6 lanes of concrete through its heart until environmentalists got a Supreme Court hearing on the plan to construct the unwanted highway.

Subway to be Built Under Central Park

The week of July 4 construction will start on part of the new Queens-Manhattan subway that will run under New York's Central Park. Two open trenches will be dug in the park, then covered over and the disturbed portion of the park above them restored. Conservationists worked with the subway planners in arranging for placement and restoration, after initially opposing the construction. Less than 3/4 acre of natural parkland will be disrupted, according to William Ronan, whose M.T.A. is responsible for the work. The job will take 42 months, longer than first planned, and will cost $37 million. The new subway will connect the IND 6th Avenue line and the BMT Broadway line with Queens.

Earthquake Delays Construction of BART Cars

The Los Angeles earthquake of Feb. 9 damaged the Sylmar factory of a subcontractor supplying friction brakes for the initial Bay Area Rapid Transit cars, resulting in delay in delivery date of the cars, first planned for completion by August. The Rohr Corp. of Chula Vista is assembling the cars, and the first 10 prototypes have been found unacceptable to BART, partly because of electric motor problems. Westinghouse builds the motors.

Train-offs and the Public Image of Railroads

FIRST REPORT OF AN EXCLUSIVE SURVEY

What happens to the public's image of railroads that make a strong point of eliminating their passenger service? What effect does the publicity generated by train-off petitions have upon the public--not necessarily "rail buffs"--who buy and sell stock in these roads and who own or operate businesses that use the freight service these railroads offer? In short, does the knowledge that railroads wish to eliminate their passenger service make for a favorable or an unfavorable view of railroads in the public eye?

These questions intrigued RTN, and we knew of no way of answering them objectively except by conducting a public opinion poll. So that's just what we did, and here we present some results of that poll as they bear on these questions. (A number of other questions were explored, and these will be reported in upcoming issues; for now we consider only the public's attitude toward railroads' dropping passenger trains.)

The opinion survey was conducted by Message Media, publishers of RTN, in February 1971. Pains were taken to make the survey as objective as possible, to follow scientific principles of polling in asking the questions to which we wanted answers.

WHO GOT THE QUESTIONNAIRE? The survey form was mailed to over 100 individuals who appeared on the mailing list of a San Francisco Bay Area travel agency. We deliberately wanted to avoid reaching only rail fans; we wanted to contact the traveling public in general. Our sample resided in the affluent areas of San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. They were an older group of people--a group of sophisticated travelers who had purchased travel tickets through an agency recently enough to be on a regular mailing list to receive round-the-world travel brochures. The 1-page questionnaire was included with a regular mailing of a color brochure describing an overseas flight package. The questionnaire was pre-stamped for easy return.

HOW WAS THE QUESTIONNAIRE CONSTRUCTED? There were twelve questions. They filled one single-spaced side of an 8½x11 sheet. Several minutes were required to complete the questions. In order to avoid focusing too closely upon trains, the first seven questions were general ones about travel.

We inquired about other modes of travel--airline, auto, and bus--in addition to rail. The survey was anonymous.

Here are some of the results of that survey:

AGE OF RESPONDENT: The average age of those responding was 60.6 years--an older group of affluent and sophisticated individuals; the sort of people who buy (or don't buy) stock in railroads and other hopefully profitable companies. The age range was from 21 to 72.

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS: Of the 100-odd forms mailed, 25 were returned at the time of preparing this summary--a pretty good return in view of the fact that respondents received no compensation for their effort, and filling out the form was somewhat time-consuming.

DID ONLY RAILFANS RESPOND? One question was "How long has it been since you last made a trip of at least 150 miles in the U.S. in each of these types of conveyance?". This was answered for airplane, auto, bus, and train. The average time since the last train trip proved to be 7.9 years; the range was from 1 month to 20 years. Obviously this was not a group of railfans. It probably represents the general public pretty well on this criterion.

THE IMPORTANT QUESTION: The critical question here was number 11: "Some U.S. railroads still provide good passenger service. Do you feel this indicates these railroads are better managed and able to maintain good income from other sources such as freight?" The replies follow:

YES:	48%
UNCERTAIN:	44%
NO:	4%
NO RESPONSE:	4%

Nearly one-half of our sample replied that railroads maintaining good passenger service are better managed than those who don't. Only 4% (just one person out of 25) felt exactly the opposite. And close to one-half were not quite sure but probably entertained some doubts about the managing ability of railroads that don't provide good passenger service.

In other words, dropping passenger trains gives railroads unfavorable publicity--at least among the group of older, fairly conservative, knowledgeable world travelers we sampled. We'd guess that when they invest in stocks they tend to steer clear of railroads that have made a big public stink about money-losing passenger operations. At least they seem to favor those that still offer good passenger service, even though they are by no means habitual train riders themselves. It's true that our sample was small and doesn't represent every age group. But with such clearcut results we'd certainly sit up and take notice if we were rail managers.

HOW TO KILL A PASSENGER TRAIN No. 9 of a series

Every so often it's helpful to sit back and consider some general principles that should guide the successful railroad manager. Since it looks as if we'll be stuck with passenger trains clogging up our rails for awhile yet, they'll still demand some of our attention. That attention should consist in considering the fastest and surest means of eliminating these useless vehicles. Passenger trains may have produced profits at one time, but those days are long gone. There will be critics who will rant and rave about land grants given railroads to stimulate the movement of people into undeveloped territories. They may even talk of taking back the land. But these ignoramuses can be ignored; the land is safely ours and we've paid our debts by transporting millions of people over it. Now it's time to concentrate upon producing earnings by either moving freight or selling or leasing the land. We should have no ties to technology. What do we care if our earnings are made by cars moving on rails or by investment in airlines or motels? Our first and most basic principle should be that a profit must be shown for stockholders. After all, they have the power to fire you and me if we don't produce that profit.

RAIL TRAVEL NEWSLETTER IS LATE

this issue because your editor was out riding some trains for the last time. Eventually you'll hear more about his ramblings. Just now we want to point out that when RTN is late it doesn't mean the news in it is stale. The rail news in RTN is always just a step behind our mailing date. It's coming to you by first class mail so you'll be the first on your block to know of the latest developments in rail travel.

Tell your friends to subscribe to RTN--just $4 for one year (24 issues), or introductory subscriptions of only $2 for six months (12 issues). Write: Message Media, Dept. RTN, P.O. Box 9007, Berkeley, Calif. 94709 U.S.A.

BACK ISSUES of RTN are still available, some in very limited quantities. Issues 1-8 are still in stock. The price is 25¢ each, or 5 for $1.00. Better hurry while they last.

Send your remittance to Message Media, Dept. RTN, P.O. Box 9007, Berkeley, California 94709 U.S.A.

EDITORIALS: THE NEW RAILPAX ROUTES

The directors of Railpax should be commended for their efforts thus far to produce a realistic and reasonable rail passenger network for this country. Working against tremendous odds--trying to put together a nationwide train system literally in the space of weeks and with scarcely enough money to buy one large depot--these men have taken on a job that under ordinary circumstances would require years of planning and millions of dollars in preliminary studies alone.

They must know that they'll never be able to please everyone, perhaps even anyone, concerned. The railroads, the union workers, the passengers will all have some reasons for complaint. Nearly everyone will be displeased because of some favorite trains or routes that are being eliminated. (Here in California the San Francisco Chief, the San Joaquin Daylight, the Del Monte, the Redwood, and the City of Los Angeles will all be sorely missed.) But these are times of new beginnings and we must look to the future and await expectantly the new railroad scene.

Railpax doesn't mean just 21 train routes around the country. It means a whole new way of approaching and marketing passenger service. It means the possibility of opening up new routes, of standing back and looking at our overall travel needs with a fresh eye.

Those who understand the value of rail travel now have the opportunity never before available of planning and working for a really meaningful passenger train system. We are only at the beginning.

ESCAPING THE POPULATION CORRIDOR

There is much talk from those penny-wise planners who think about trains only in terms of "population corridors," meaning that if a train doesn't serve a vast population and make an immediate monetary profit it shouldn't exist.

This kind of thinking is erroneous. There's a case to be made for the little train that runs through the backwoods. It won't be in the Railpax network. It will be gone May 1, and with it another piece of simple pleasure that's increasingly hard to find in a world where sameness has become the rule. Maybe it'll be replaced by a highway, followed by a chain of look-alike motels. Soon no one will be able to sit by a coach window and watch pristine nature passing outside. We won't realize our mistake until it's too late and too costly to correct. One of society's biggest problems is boredom; it's getting more serious daily, and our transformation of all America into population corridors isn't helping.

Express Ads

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GOLDEN SPIKE Centennial railroad slides from the exhibit at Sacramento, May 1969. Six 35mm color slides, original Central Pacific, Virginia & Truckee locos, SP Centennial trains, $1.65. Message Media, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709
CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR'S Last Days. Six color slides made in March 1970. Set X-7, $1.65. Message Media, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.
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CASSETTE TAPE RECORDING of California Zephyr leaving Oakland March 14, 1970. Entire 13-minute unedited departure. Tape quality below our standards: tape hiss and some "dropouts", frequency range somewhat restricted. All details clearly heard, however. Railfans invariably enjoy it. On standard C-30 cassette. Request tape T-1. $1.30. Message Media, PO Box 9007, Berkeley, Calif. 94709.
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